

AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES NEWSLETTER

The U.S. Embassy is transmitting the following monthly newsletter via its warden system as a public service to U.S. citizens in Mongolia. Please feel free to disseminate this message to U.S. citizens in your organizations or to other Americans you know.



Town Hall Meeting on May 17, 2011

On May 17, 2011 the Consular Section and Regional Security Office held a joint Town Hall Meeting to discuss security and immigration issues that American Citizens face in Mongolia.

Three officials from the Mongolian Immigration Authority headed by Ms. Saranchimeg, Head of the Visa Section in the Division of Permits and Registration, as well as over 50 Americans who reside long-term in Mongolia were present at the meeting.



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Nick Hill, the Deputy Chief of Mission, opened the THM and welcomed the guests. He emphasized that the protection and welfare of American Citizens in the country are the utmost priorities of the U.S. Embassy. Tim Feeney, Regional Security Officer, gave an overall briefing of the security situation in Mongolia. He drew the participants' attention to the increased number of xenophobic attacks against foreign nationals, especially women, in Ulaanbaatar over the past several months. RSO Feeney advised US Citizens to exercise extreme caution when taking taxis or any other public transportation and to avoid going out alone at night. Many questions were asked and personal experiences shared regarding crime in Mongolia.

Then Consul Phil Cargile introduced the officials from the Mongolian Immigration Authority, who gave a detailed presentation on the changes to the recent law pertaining to foreigners in Mongolia. The major change in the new law is that all the foreigners are required to carry their passports or Mongolian-issued ID cards. All long-term residents in Mongolia will be getting the ID card from the Immigration Authority either at the time of residency permit renewal or upon application for the card. To get the card, one must submit a copy of his valid passport with the residency permit in it, one picture, a letter from Employer and a fee of 16,500 MNT. Then the applicant will get fingerprinted at the Immigration office and will receive the ID card with fingerprint chip in it. A replacement ID card will cost you 140,000 MNT.

Another important change to the law is that a foreigner will no longer be able to change his visa category while in the country. If a foreigner entered Mongolia as a tourist or a student and has subsequently found a job, he will not be able to adjust his status while in Mongolia. He will need to leave the country, get the correct visa category and come back. (continued...)

Town Hall Meeting on May 17, 2011 (continued)

It was emphasized by the Immigration officials that while American Citizens travelling to Mongolia as tourists do not require a visa for up to 90 days, they have to register with the Immigration within 7 working days if they are planning to stay in the country for over 30 days. Tourists who do not stay in Ulaanbaatar but continue to the countryside, will need to register with Governors of respective aimags.

Immigration officials drew particular attention to the fact that working in Mongolia without permission (e.g. if a person comes as a tourist and starts teaching or practicing religion) results in deportation. They encouraged foreign nationals to follow the Mongolian laws and avoid paying fines which have considerably increased.

You can find the complete version of the new Law of Mongolia on the Legal Status of Foreign nationals [here](#).

DID YOU REMEMBER TO FILE YOUR TAXES ?

If not, don't worry. If you reside overseas or are in the military on duty outside the U.S., you are allowed an automatic 2-month extension to file your return until June 15. However, any tax due must have been paid by the original return due date (April 15) to avoid interest charges.

Publication 4732 contains specific tax information for Americans living abroad and can be downloaded at: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4732.pdf>.

STATE TAX RETURNS: For individual state income tax information, visit <http://www.taxadmin.org/>. The Embassy does not have state tax forms or state tax information.

Taxpayers with an AGI (Adjusted Gross Income) of \$58,000 or less can electronically file their tax return for free using [freefile](#). Taxpayers with an AGI greater than \$58,000 can [efile by purchasing commercial software](#).

A special note for U.S. citizens who maintain in excess of \$10,000 in a foreign bank account: you are required to report your financial information in a Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts (FBAR) to the U.S. Department of Treasury before June 30th. For more information, visit <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=148849.00.html>.

The Town Hall participants were given a chance to directly ask questions and discuss immigration issues with the Mongolian officials. The questions ranged from "Who could stop a foreigner on the street and ask for an ID and what would be the motive to do so?" to the procedure of visa extension and registration with the Mongolian Immigration. After the official program ended, many participants stayed for refreshments and a chance to meet each other and to discuss individual concerns with Embassy staff.



"Greed keeps men
forever poor,
even the abundance
of this world
will not make them rich."
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Mongolian proverb



Notice about the 4th of July Community Picnic

Dear Fellow American Citizens,

This year the 4th of July Community Picnic will not take place, as nobody from the American community stepped forward to organize it. In the past, members of the U.S. Embassy have chaired the planning committee. However, these people will be moving this summer, and the Embassy will not be able to organize the picnic without your participation.

ROAD SAFETY OVERSEAS

May 11, 2011 marks the official launch date of the Decade of Action for Road Safety, which was adopted in the March 2010 UN General Assembly resolution on Global Road Safety.

The goal of the Decade of Action is to raise awareness of the impacts of road crashes on public health throughout the world and to promote interventions to reduce road crashes by 50% by the Decade's end in 2020.

The U.S. Department of State is working with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other multilateral organizations, with foreign governments, with other U.S. Government agencies, and non-governmental organizations on a number of initiatives to advance international road safety. For more information, visit [WHO Decade of Action for Road Safety](#).

We encourage you to check out the following links for [Road Safety Overseas](#) and [Country Specific Information](#) for traffic safety and roads condition in Mongolia.

Appointment System for Routine American Citizens Services

The American Citizen Services Unit in Ulaanbaatar gets busier every summer and we are always evaluating how we provide services for the growing American community in Mongolia. Following the experience of other ACS Units in neighboring countries, we are planning to introduce an appointment system for routine consular services in the near future.

Requiring appointments for all our non-emergency, routine services means that we will be able to serve everyone more quickly and efficiently – it will lessen considerably the long lines and busy waiting room that we often have during non-appointment sessions. Of course, we'll always take care of U.S. citizens with emergencies whether they have an appointment or not. Only routine American Citizen Services such as passport applications, requests for Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, and notarial services will require appointments – clientele coming to report the arrest of an American in Mongolia, request assistance in locating a missing American or seek assistance regarding the death of an American overseas do not need an appointment and can come at anytime during public hours.

Our work hours remain the same – 1:00 to 3:00 pm every Monday and Wednesday except Federal and Mongolian holidays. We will provide further information on the new appointment system later this summer. Watch this space and our website for details.

Have safe holiday travels this summer.

A Message to American Communities and Organizations in Mongolia

The Embassy encourages all business groups, churches, private companies, and other organizations with a nucleus of American citizens to make sure that the Embassy has a point of contact for your group.

To receive Embassy announcements and advisories via e-mail, please join the Embassy Newslist. Your membership in the Embassy Newslist will assure you of receiving Embassy issued announcements and advisories in a timely manner. Your private information will be kept strictly confidential. Send an email to the Embassy at UlaanbaatarACS@state.gov giving the name of your organization, a point of contact (POC), email address, phone number, and any other contact information. It is not necessary that your POC be an American citizen. The Embassy will use this information to contact your group in an emergency. Please type "Group Contact Info" on the subject line of your email.

Question of the month: I'm traveling to another country this summer. Do I need a visa?

Customers often ask our staff what kind of documentation they need to travel to other countries while living in Mongolia. Entry and exit requirements are different for every country, and the State Department provides information on those requirements in the Country Specific Information (CSI). Some countries require U.S. citizens to have visas before entering; some do not. Some visas can be purchased at the port of entry; others must be applied for in advance. So if you're travelling this summer, be sure to check the CSI for your destination at travel.state.gov.

SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP)

Stay Informed. Sign up for our free [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (formerly known as "Travel Registration" or "Registration with Embassies") to receive the latest travel updates and information! You only need to sign up once, and then you can add and delete trips from your account based on your current travel plans!

Stay Connected. By connecting with us on the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#), we will be able to assist you better in the case of an emergency, such as if you lose your passport or it is stolen while you are abroad. We also assist U.S. citizens in other emergencies, such as in natural disasters.

Stay Safe. We believe that a well-informed traveler is a safer traveler. Our consular officers around the world compile [country-specific information](#), [travel alerts](#), [travel warnings](#), fact sheets and warden messages to provide you with timely and accurate travel information about every country where you may travel. Stay informed by connecting with us via our [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) so you can have safe and enjoyable travels!

The CSI also includes other useful information, like security threats, crime trends, accessibility for individuals with disabilities, information on health resources, and traffic and safety conditions.

Before you depart on your trip, don't forget to sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. Signing up with your travel plans allows the Department of State to better assist you in an emergency.

Embassy Contact Information

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Washington, DC, 20521-4410

Travel Warnings and Alerts

[Burundi](#) 06/01/2011
[Yemen](#) 05/25/2011

[Hurricane Season](#) 06/01/2011
[Japan](#) 05/16/2011
[Bahrain](#) 05/13/2011
[World Wide](#) 05/01/2011

For additional information about these travel warnings and alerts, please go to this site:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html

Upcoming Holidays

July 4—Independence Day
July 11—13—Naadam